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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 2520
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 12-04-07

NSK-1665

24 June 1948

Chief, FEM
Attn: ☐
Acting Chief of Station, Kaviaraha

Conferences with Officials from USFA Signal Office;
Austrian PFF; Problems of Austrian Amateur Radio Activity

1. ☐ of our Vienna Office arranged a conference with Mr. Geo White, technical adviser to Col. Washburn (Chief Signal Officer, USFA) and Mr. Wade (formerly connected with the 849th SIS in Italy). Both gentlemen were interrogated by ☐ and this report serves to supplement that given by him upon his return.

2. The Austrian post at the present time conducts limited D.F. activity. The Austrians procured Signal Corps wigwag-type D.F. installation through OFIC in Belgium. The purpose of the D.F. activity is aimed at locating and isolating illegal amateur radio operators. Our sources indicated that the PFF virtually is under Russian control and consequently any effective reporting of clandestine radio activity in the Soviet zone of Austria results in mere paper work as Post officials are powerless to trace down their leads and eliminate the clandestine operator. We are quite anxious to learn more about the availability of D.F. equipment in Belgium as this probably would be of interest to ☐. However, these gentlemen were not in a position to give any assistance along these lines.

3. In view of the quadripartite agreements, all powers occupying Austria have been given lists of pre-war, during war and post-war amateur operators. This list includes names and addresses of previously licensed Austrian amateur radio operators. The Russian party member of the quadripartite commission on radio activity refuses to permit licensing of amateur radio activities and insists that strict measures be taken against offenders in the western zone of Austria. Our sources indicated that in view of the above the only activity which is permitted for amateur radio men is to form associations and discuss mutual interests, particularly technical developments. Our sources state that the larger amateur associations, particularly the chief one in Vienna is dominated by Communist party members. Consequently any interested person heretofore not on the amateur radio lists described above would be made known to the Russians. Thus, the Russians virtually control whatever limited power the Austrian post is able to hold. Russians further forbid transmissions of very high and ultra high frequency type.

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4. Russians effectively control all land lines leading out of Vienna. It is the opinion of the aforementioned gentlemen that the repeater station at Sankt Pölten is a primary monitoring installation of the main telephone and teletype line between USFA Headquarters in Austria and HUSHON offices in Germany. Considerable activity has been noticed in this area, particularly as land lines have been relocated physically speaking.

5. As far as these gentlemen know, the Russians had^e inferior radio equipment but possess an adequate number of BC-610 transmitters and BC-348 type receivers. These gentlemen ventured to state that Russian D.F. activity was considerably inferior to what we would expect them to have. They were unable to indicate what signal battalion units were deployed in the Vienna area and Soviet Zone of Austria. We find this information interesting, particularly in view of our ICEBERG activity and we asked the Vienna station to proceed very cautiously in recruiting stay-behind operators who have had any connection with amateur radio operations, but not in pre-war days. We believe it is by far more prudent to recruit someone from the professional class and train him in the rudiments of radio work than expose our project to possible compromise. Again, security should not be sacrificed on behalf of time.

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